

THE MILITARY AND THE NEWS MEDIA: THE COORIENTATION  
MEASUREMENT MODEL APPLIED TO MILITARY-NEWS MEDIA  
RELATIONS

by  
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A THESIS

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for the degree of Master of Arts in  
the Department of Journalism  
in the Graduate School of  
The University of Alabama

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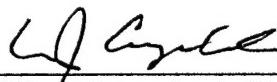
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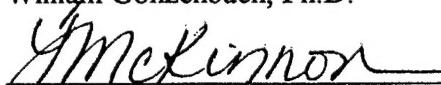
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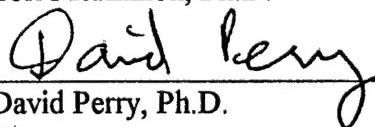
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## ABSTRACT

The traditional role of the military in our society is to support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. The traditional role of the press is to keep the public informed to ensure a functional democracy. Subsequently, when U.S. forces engage foreign enemies in combat, a relationship between the two institutions evolves. The news media strive to represent the unmitigated facts of combat to the U.S. public. The military, however, although agreeing to the principle and necessity of open and independent coverage of events, at times places restrictive measures on the freedom of information for the safety and security of American forces. The conflicting goals, roles, and objectives of each institution affect the nature of the military-news media relationship. As such, there is the possibility that differing perceptions held by each institution concerning relevant attributes of the relationship may affect the overall association. This study applied the coorientation measurement model to the military-news media relationship to isolate differing perceptions held by each institution.

The study examined three relevant attributes of the relationship: (a) a prepublication security review of news material (censorship); (b) access to combat zones; and (c) the future of the relationship. The study used a one-page questionnaire mailed to 232 news-media professionals with experience covering military operations and 212 military professionals with experience dealing with the news media.

Respondents were chosen by sampling compiled mailing lists meeting the criteria for each group of respondents.

The study tested three hypotheses. One predicted that the military and the news media perceptions concerning prepublication review of news material will not agree. Another predicted that the military and the news media perceptions concerning news media access to the combat will not agree. The third predicted that the military and news media perceptions concerning future relations will be in agreement. The major findings of the study support these hypotheses. The research results indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the mean perceptions held by the military and the news media concerning access to combat zones and prepublication security reviews of news material. The research results also indicate no statistically significant difference between the military and the news media concerning the future of the relationship. As such, improving communications between the two institutions about these differing perceptions may lead to improved relations in the future.

## Introduction and Overview

The relationship between the military and news media is in a constant state of change. The military, attempting to protect its interests, continually seeks to utilize the news media's ability to influence the public. The news media, likewise, continually seek to stand behind the principles of the First Amendment and provide the public with the truth. Throughout modern history, the news media have endured systems of censorship and restrictions of access. They have been subject to military guidelines that prohibit the publication of information deemed vital to security and to prepublication security reviews of news releases (Knightley, 1975). Additionally, the media have not been granted full access to the battlefield and have been forced to follow the military's guidelines concerning who is or is not allowed access to the battlefield (Trainor, 1991). Both methods of control have, at times, been declared necessary by the military to ensure security and maintain control of the battlefield during armed conflicts involving U.S. military personnel. Both methods of control strike at the very heart of the freedoms the news media hold dear. The military, however, stands by these methods of control as being integral security measures to minimize friendly casualties on the battlefield. The two vastly different orientations toward each institution's roles, goals, and objectives create situations ripe for misunderstanding and conflict.

Understanding the relationship between the two institutions requires an understanding of the terms used in defining the relationship. For the purposes of this study, the term military represents the officers and civilians who serve the United States Armed Forces as public affairs, public relations, and public information officers. It represents the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard. The term is limited to those individuals who work with the news media on a frequent basis. These individuals are the military's liaisons to the news media. For the purposes of this study, the definition specifies individuals capable of developing and implementing the military's policy toward working with the news media. As such, these individuals may represent a source of attitudes and perceptions toward the news media held by military personnel who do not frequently interact with the news media. For the purposes of this study they represent the perceptions and attitudes of the military institution toward the news media.

Similarly, the term news media does not refer to just a single organization. It refers to the vast expanse of media outlets such as newsprint, magazines, television, and radio. Each outlet contains its own methods, styles, roles and responsibilities. For this study though, the news media is composed of print journalists, editors, and publishers who work within 50 miles of a military installation. These people work in locations that ensure frequent interaction with the previously defined members of the military. These individuals, by virtue of their experience covering the military during war and peace, may also be among those who can influence the news media's attitudes

and perceptions of the military. For the purposes of this study they represent the perceptions and attitudes of the news media institution toward the military.

The tenuous relationship between the military and the news media has been evolving since a reporter first covered a battle during the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848. The Civil War, though, pointedly marks the beginning of this strained relationship. General William Tecumseh Sherman had feelings toward the press that provide an excellent illustration of the beginnings of conflict between the military and the news media. Sherman labeled the press a “set of dirty scribblers who have the impudence of Satan” (Sears, 1985, p. 1). He believed the press were defamers of the army and publishers of vital military secrets for which they deserved to be punished as traitors. Sherman developed these sentiments over the course of the war and publicly denounced the press at every opportunity. The issues Sherman addressed--access to the battlefield and censorship--have remained staple areas of contention between the two institutions.

These two areas remained points of contention during the evolution of modern military and news media relations. The two institutions have sought to adapt to ever-changing situations while answering the questions surrounding censorship and access. Censorship and access restrictions have been a part of every major military conflict involving U.S. military personnel. World Wars I and II, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm all had some forms of censorship and/or restrictions on access. These two areas highlight the differences in the military and news media

roles, goals, and objectives. These are also attributes of the military-news media relationship that may foster differing perceptions and attitudes within each institution.

The perceptions and attitudes concerning these attributes are key elements in maintaining a functional working relationship between the military and news media. These perceptions and attitudes are key ingredients to effective communication (Carter, 1965). As such, effective communication is a vital aspect in maintaining and improving relations between the two institutions. Examining the perceptions held by the two institutions concerning censorship and restrictions will isolate areas where differing or conflicting perceptions exist. Differing or conflicting perceptions may lead to ineffective communication. The coorientation measurement model allows one to measure the agreement, congruency, and accuracy of these perceptions (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973). The model may also indicate the necessity for increased communication in certain areas to alleviate tensions surrounding perceptions held by each institution. Subsequently, this research may lead to recommendations for improving military-media relations through improved communication, actions, and procedures as they relate to the differing or conflicting perceptions.

Little actual research into the interpersonal nature of military-media relations, or the perceptions and communication between the two, exists for interpretation and analysis. The following literature review illuminates the background of military-media relations, censorship and access issues, the status of relations today, and the intellectual framework of the coorientation measurement model.

## Literature Review

The evolution of the relationship between the military and the news media is inherently linked to the major military conflicts involving the United States. Reporters first rode into battle with U.S. soldiers during the Mexican-American War and have been a part of every subsequent major military operation (Thompson, 1991). The history of the evolution illuminates the context of the complex relationship between the two institutions today. It also highlights the contextual development of perceptions and attitudes concerning the issues of censorship and access. The framework of the relationship consequently provides insights into the perceptions and beliefs held by members of each institution. Once these are established and the historical framework is laid, the intellectual background surrounding the coorientation measurement model is examined.

### The Early Years: The Civil War to The Korean War

The Civil War provides an excellent beginning in the examination of the relationship between the military and the news media. That conflict provided the first large-scale interaction between the military and the media. As such, it also represents a contextual illustration of the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes held by each institution. During the Civil War, the press infuriated General Sherman with information leaks and actions he deemed highly offensive. His ire and dislike of the

media were well known and representative of a large number of military men who inherited the General's attitude (Ewing, 1987). Eventually, based not on personal feelings or illwill, the military imposed a form of censorship upon the press as a means of preserving the security of information that might be helpful to the enemy (Sears, 1985). Censorship, or prepublication security reviews of news material, became a foundation of military-news media relations during armed conflicts involving the U.S. military and it would last for decades.

Censorship remained a basic policy for the military throughout both World Wars. The news media accepted the censorship policies and restrictions on access as necessities of covering combat situations, but the tensions surrounding these policies kept growing (Thompson, 1991). The military, lacking adequate personnel and equipment resources, attempted to forgo imposing a censorship policy during the Korean War. The news media, though, forced the military to impose a censoring policy by including sensitive, secret information in media outlets (Knightley, 1975). *Time Magazine* printed the entire order of battle for the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea. The accompanying maps included names and specific locations of military units in the country. Once again censorship and access became focal points of military-news media relations in combat situations.

#### Recent History: Vietnam to Bosnia

The Vietnam conflict represents a major turning point in the relations between the two institutions. Through the early years of the war and into early 1968, the

military and the news media coexisted in the combat zones of southeast Asia. The nature of the conflict and the great distances between military units caused the news media to rely upon the military for a large part of their information concerning the war. The military, unable to impose a censorship policy without a formal declaration of war, attempted to satiate the news media's requests for information. While providing information to the media, the military also issued and followed restrictive internal guidelines to limit the access of the news media to combat situations (Kennedy, 1993). The military, by issuing and following the restrictive internal guidelines, in effect maintained control over the security of information as well as access to the battlefield.

The Tet Offensive of 1968, though, changed the way the media conducted their business. The Tet Offensive brought the war to the streets of Saigon, Hue, Khe Sahn, and thereby closer to the news media. News media coverage of Tet was overstated and glamorized, and it misinterpreted what actually happened during the offensive (Braestrup, 1983). Although the battle was a victory from the military point of view, the news media portrayed the offensive as a serious blow to the entire war effort. From that point on, the news media became more aggressive and critical in their coverage of the war. The unexpected turnaround by the news media, and the misrepresentation of the Tet Offensive, angered the military and created widespread resentment of the media in the ranks (Thompson, 1991).

Following Vietnam, the relationship weathered numerous challenges. The invasion of Grenada, which was completely blacked out to media coverage, and the

creation of press pools to control news media access to combat zones, created tensions between the news media and the military that reached all-time highs (Trainor, 1991). The heart of the dissension between the two institutions once again lay in the policies surrounding censorship and access to the combat zone.

Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm represented a period of increased tensions between the military and the news media as well. Although most of the civilian population considered the news media's coverage of the war a success, tensions between the military and the media increased (Allen, 1991). The media decried the use of the pool systems and all censorship policies (Sidle, 1991). Subsequently, the media filed a lawsuit against the Department of Defense challenging the constitutionality of its restrictive policies. The lawsuit was turned back to lower courts due to its vagueness, but it did establish the authority of the military to restrict access to the battlefield in certain situations (Jacobs, 1992). The lawsuit, though, was also representative of negative attitudes and perceptions present within the news media concerning the restrictive military policies of the time.

Following the desert war, the military and the news media realized the need to develop new guidelines for coverage of combat situations. The two institutions, represented by the leaders of each, met and proposed 10 new guidelines for news media coverage of combat. The guidelines covered the following seven topics: open and independent coverage of military operations, the use of news media pools, the requirement for journalists to be credentialed by the military, the duties of military

public affairs officers; transportation of news media personnel, allocation of news transmission equipment, and the requirement for prepublication security reviews of news material in certain situations. Of the 10 proposed new guidelines, the military and the news media agreed to implement 9 (Department Of Defense, 1996). The 10th and still contested guideline is the necessity for censorship policies in certain combat situations. The military insists there must be a provision allowing censorship in certain situations, and the news media vehemently oppose any such guideline.

The agreed-upon guidelines have been tried and tested in such locales as Haiti, Somalia, and most recently Bosnia. In each circumstance, the military and the news media continued to forge a new relationship in the context of each new and unusual military operation. The relationship, although definitely better than the post-Vietnam era, still has not encountered a situation requiring the use of censorship policies or access restrictions since the desert war. One may assume that perceptions surrounding the two policies are still present and predominant in each institution.

#### Coorientation and its Application

Quoting B. F. Skinner in Beyond Freedom and Dignity (1971), McLeod and Chaffee (1973) related that wars are fought to “change the hearts and minds of men” (p. 469). As such, communication between two or more individuals is necessary to stimulate such drastic changes in the world. Communication is the key to improving, maintaining, developing, or even destroying relationships between two or more individuals. Instead of looking to isolated, individual qualities surrounding

communication, one often must examine the communication between two or more individuals to satisfy empirical questions.

In studying the communication between two or more individuals, McLeod and Chaffee discussed the relationship between perceptions and communication behavior. The perceptions of an individual relate directly to the key assumption in their work: “A person’s behavior is not based simply on his private cognitive construction of his world; it is also a function of his perceptions of the orientations held by others around him and his orientation to them” (p. 470). Individuals have perceptions of people, places, and things. These perceptions, whether they are positive or negatively oriented, affect the actions of the individuals. Communication behaviors become an outcome of the relationship between the perceptions of two or more individuals. Understanding the perceptions of the military and news media as they relate to their relationship may shed light on new techniques for improving the communication between the two and the relationship itself.

McLeod and Chaffee (1973) developed their work on coorientation through the synthesis of five much older approaches to interpersonal communication. The theory developed from a synthesis of the consensus approach, symbolic interaction, interpersonal psychiatry, coorientation, and person perception. Each of these approaches to the study of interpersonal communication added key ingredients to McLeod and Chaffee’s coorientation model.

The coorientation model developed by Newcomb (1953) had a great influence on the model developed by McLeod and Chaffee. Newcomb's model assumes that two individuals, denoted by A and B, responding to one another in a positive or negative manner are simultaneously oriented to an object of communication X. When A and B both have a positive perception of one another, their attitudes toward X should be in agreement. If a discrepancy is involved there is tension, and avenues of tension reduction must be explored. An example of one such discrepancy may be found in military-news media relations. The news media (A) may like the military (B) but not like the status of military-news media relations (X). The military (B) may like the media (A) and also like the status of military-media relations (X). The discrepancy may lie in the different evaluations of the status of military-news media relations. Subsequently, according to Newcomb, A or B will change his or her orientation toward the other, toward X, or even end the communication about the object of their orientations.

Another model supporting their work was the general model of interpersonal perception developed by Laing, Phillipson, and Lee (1966). The general model introduced the concept of a "spiral of reciprocal perspectives" where three different perspectives are identified and defined. A direct perspective is what person A thinks about an issue. A metaperspective is what person A thinks about the way person B evaluates an issue. A meta-metaperspective is what person A thinks person B thinks

of his perspective. As such, the agreement between two individuals or groups can be measured by comparing direct perspectives on the same issue.

Chaffee and McLeod also followed upon the thinking of Carter (1965) and his approaches to the individuals and their cognitions. Carter pointed out that one does not orient oneself to a single object in the environment but to a discrimination between objects. Chaffee and McLeod utilized the idea of discrimination to a greater degree, stating that subsequently, the individual makes numerous discriminations concerning different attributes of an object of orientation instead of discriminating between numerous objects. In this situation, the research is directed toward assessing the discriminations or perceptions toward three major attributes of the object of orientation: military-news media relations. The concept of utilizing different attributes of the object of orientation as discriminating factors may isolate problem areas within the relationship.

The coorientation measurement model developed out of the numerous preceding theories and models dealing with coorientation and interpersonal communication. In the coorientation measurement model (Figure 1), the boxes on the left represent individual A's views of X as well as A's perception of B's views of the same object. The boxes on the right indicate individual B's corresponding perceptions. Agreement in the A to B interpersonal relationship regarding X is represented by the arrows that connect individual A's measurements with those of B's. This signifies the extent to which A and B hold the same definitions of X. The extent

of this understanding is defined as mutual agreement. Additionally, the extent to which A and B both evaluate X using the same attributes constitutes understanding. The congruency arrows represent the degree of similarity between A's own thoughts of X and A's perceptions of B's thoughts on X. Accuracy is therefore the extent to which A's perceptions of B's views match what B really thinks concerning X. The coorientational measurement model, with minor adjustments, represents an acceptable method for researching certain aspects of the military-media relationship.

The nature of the research requires simple modification of the coorientation measurement model (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973) to resemble Broom's (1977) adapted model for studying corporate public relations communication (Figure 2). Broom's revised model seeks to analyze data from the public and the corporation/organization to answer four distinct questions dealing with definition issues of interest to both the corporation and the public. Answering the definitional questions allows the researcher to identify the concept of "reification" or "attributing views to a group of people as if it were a unified entity with a group mind" (p. 114).

The only difference in the research with the military-media study is that it now consists of two corporations/organizations (the military and the media) as compared to corporate/organizational and public. The questions also define the military and news media perceptions toward attributes of the military-news media relation to determine the levels of agreement between each institution's perceptions.

Utilizing the definitions of the military and news media ascribed to this study, the results are applicable to the institutions as a whole. Following the work of Grunig

and Stamm, the participants of this study will allow reification of the data to represent each institution in its entirety. According to Grunig and Stamm (1973), it is possible to reify the perceptions of collectivities as long as the samples chosen for the research retain the power and positions to actually account for the perceptions of an entire group. In this research, the participants chosen retain both the power and experience to account for the perceptions of both institutions. The definitions of terms used in this study restrict the respondents to those individuals in positions of power and influence in each institution. These individuals, based on their experience and positions in each institution, represent those most able to influence and account for the perceptions of each institutions.

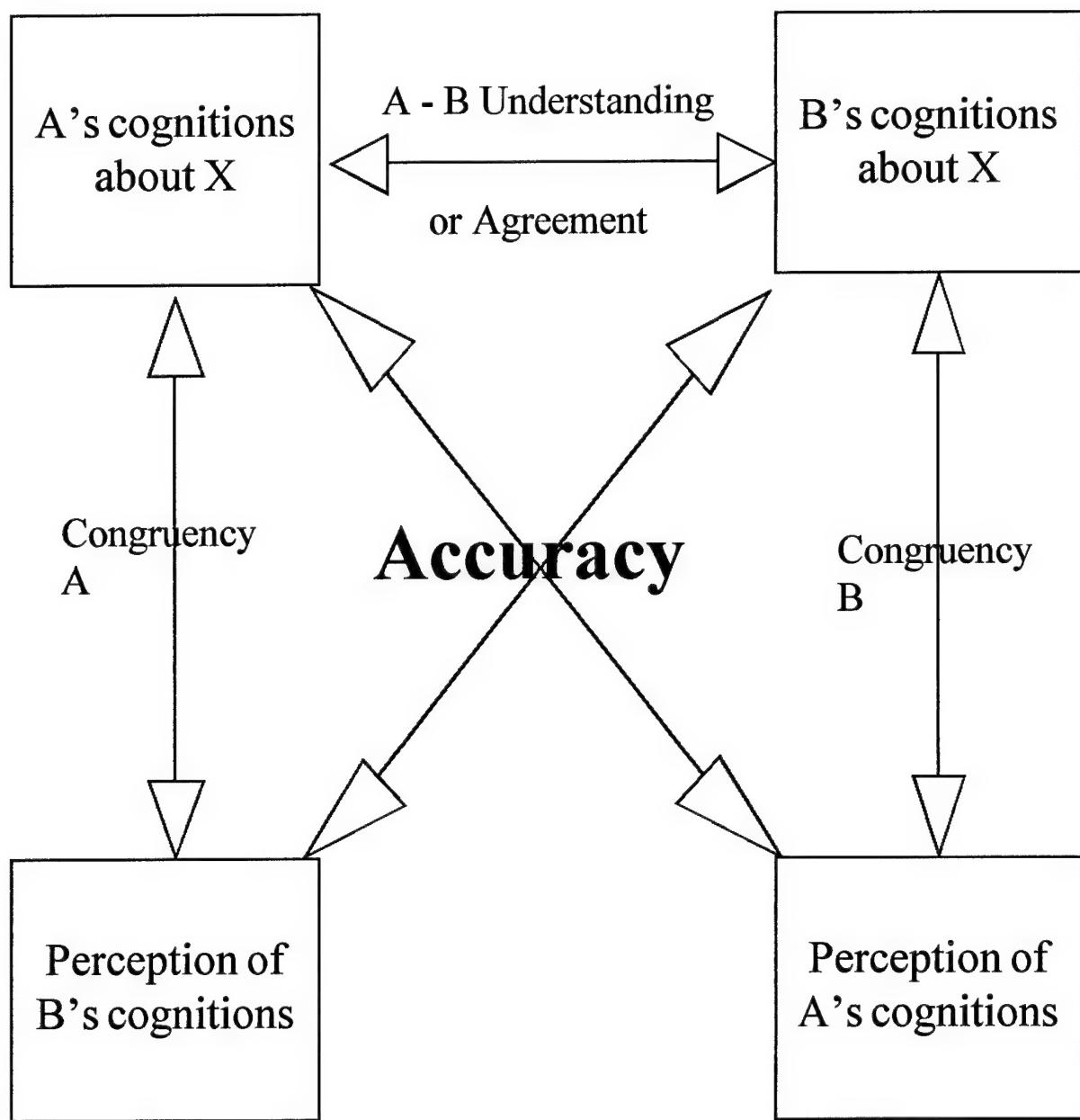


Figure 1. The coorientation measurement model (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973).

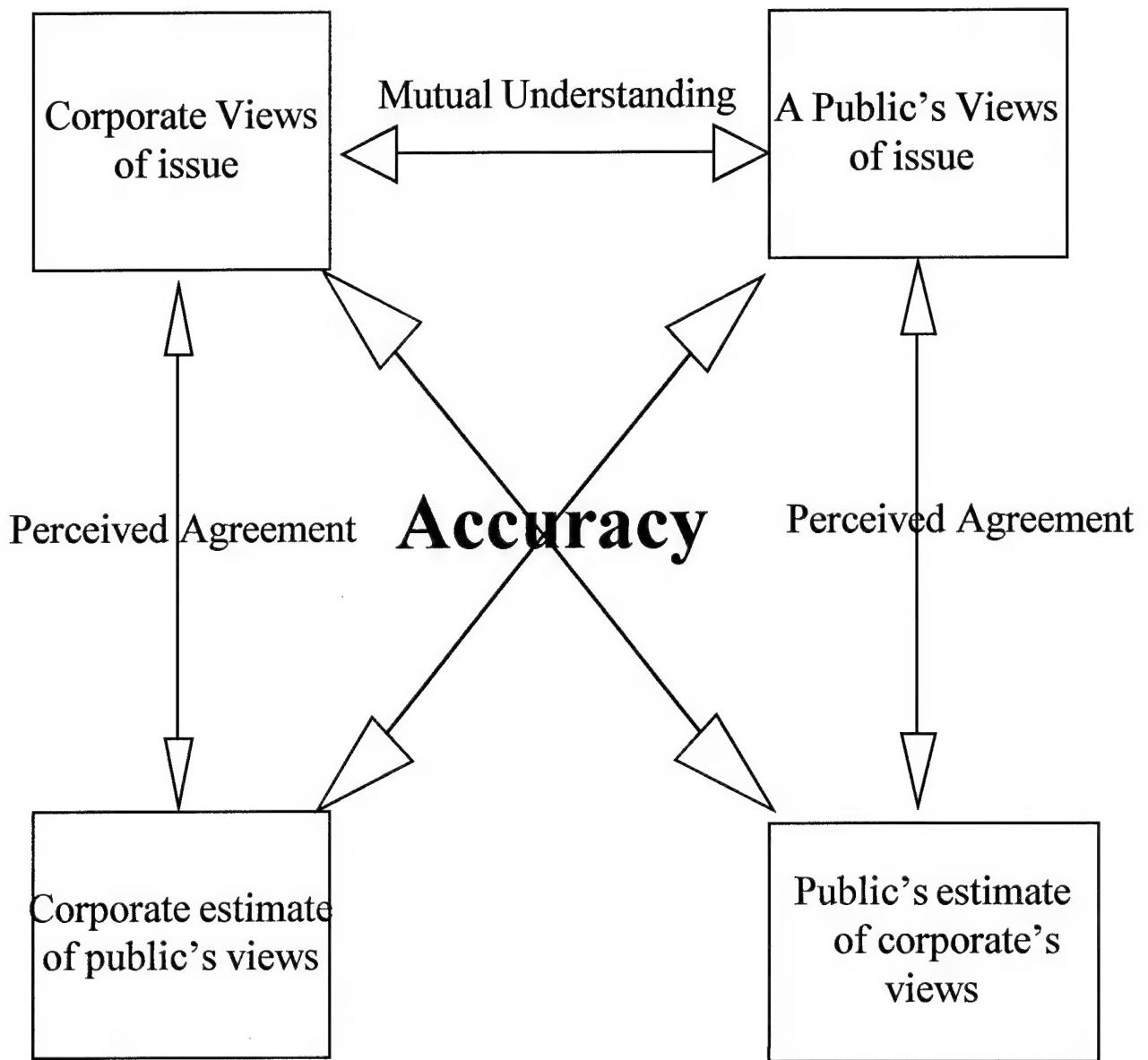


Figure 2. The coorientation model (Broom, 1977).

## Hypotheses

The research is based on three major assumptions:

- A1: The military participants used in the research are oriented toward the news media as a collectivity, as well as individuals.
- A2: The news media participants used in the research are oriented toward the military as a collectivity, as well as individuals.
- A3: The respondents used in the research retain power and positions that account for the perceptions of the entire collectivity.

The research addressed three hypotheses:

- H1: The military and the news media perceptions concerning news media access to the battlefield do not agree.
- H2: The military and the news media perceptions concerning prepublication security reviews of news material do not agree.
- H3: The military and the news media perceptions concerning improving future relations are in agreement.

The hypotheses stem from indications present throughout the history of the military-news media relationship. The first hypothesis originated from the apparent submission by the news media to the guidelines proposed by the military concerning news media pools that restrict access to the battlefield. Although members of the news media did accept the guidelines proposed by the military, the news media previously disliked any such methods. The ire created within the news media concerning the news blackout of the invasion of Grenada and the lawsuit brought against the Department of Defense challenging such guidelines suggest that differing or conflicting perceptions may still be present in the institution today. Although the news media did accept the proposed guidelines, tensions within the relationship may still derive from differing perceptions on the necessity for guidelines restricting access to the battlefield.

The second hypothesis predicts that the military and the news media perceptions concerning the necessity for pre publication review news material do not agree. The news media vehemently oppose any type or method of censorship, as witnessed by the news media's nonacceptance of the recently proposed guideline concerning prepublication security review of news material (Department Of Defense, 1996). Such disagreement between the two institutions may indicate differing or conflicting perceptions held by each institution concerning prepublication review of news material.

The third hypothesis is derived from the willingness of each institution to meet and propose changes in the relationship (Gersh, 1991). The willingness of both institutions to attempt to strengthen the relationship in future conflicts may indicate similar perceptions of the future of the military-news media relationship.

### Method

The research for this study used a one-page questionnaire (Appendix B) involving questions about the status of military-news media relations, prepublication security reviews, accessibility to the battlefield, and the future of the relationship. The questionnaire also included two open-ended questions addressing problems and recommendations.

It, along with a formal cover letter (See Appendix A), was mailed to 212 military personnel and 231 news media personnel. The military personnel were sampled from a group of 650 military facilities in the United States. The 231 media personnel were sampled from a composite group of 1,900 daily, weekly, and bimonthly newspapers in the United States located within 50 miles of a military facility. The respondents were sampled from all the newspapers in the United States having more than 100 employees.

The computer-generated random samples were supplied by Answers Direct, Inc., a commercial mailing facility located in Atlanta, Georgia. Follow-up postcards were mailed 7 days after the initial mailing.

### Respondents

The response rate for the military personnel exceeded expectations. Of a sample size of 212, the response was 121, or 57.1%. The response rate for the news

media personnel met expectations. Of a sample size of 232, the response was 91, or 39.2%. The overall response rate of 212 out of 444 was 47.74% (See Table 1 for sample profile).

### Apparatus

The questionnaire itself (see Appendix B) was broken into four parts:

1. Institutional information, including employer and job descriptions listing the target personnel.

2. Perceptions, comprising 13 statements with which respondents could strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Statements centered on the three attributes of the military-news media relationship examined in this study.

3. Relevant questions, comprising two open-ended questions that allowed the respondents to identify the major problems in military-news media relations and recommend actions to improve relations.

4. Demographics, including information on gender, years in current position, age, and whether or not the respondent had any experience working with the military or news media in a combat zone.

Questionnaires were sent out with the cover letter and a self-addressed stamped return envelope on October 14, 1996. Respondents were asked to return the questionnaire by November 2. The resulting data was coded and processed in SPSS on November 8, 1996.

Table 1

Sample Profile

	Frequency	%
<b>Respondent (<u>n</u> = 212)</b>		
Military	121	54.7
News Media	91	45.3
<b>Gender (<u>n</u> = 212)</b>		
Male	155	73.1
Military	86	55.5
News Media	69	44.5
Female	57	26.9
Military	35	61.4
News Media	22	38.6
<b>Job Description (<u>n</u> = 212)</b>		
Military	121	54.7
Public affairs officer	94	77.7
Commanding officer	24	19.8
Editor	2	1.7
Journalist	1	.8
News Media	91	45.3
Editor	52	57.1
Publisher	34	37.4
Journalist	5	5.5
<b>Experience In Combat Zone (<u>n</u> = 212)</b>		
Military	121	54.7
No	83	68.6
Yes	38	31.4
News Media	91	45.3
No	70	76.9
Yes	21	23.1

	Frequency	%
<b>Age</b>		
Military	121	54.7
26-34	22	18.1
35-40	36	29.8
41-45	33	27.2
46-50	15	12.3
51-55	7	5.9
56-65	8	6.7
News Media	91	45.3
26-34	6	6.6
35-40	10	11.0
41-45	19	20.9
46-50	19	20.9
51-55	20	22.0
56-65	17	18.6
<b>Years in current position</b>		
Military	121	54.7
1-5	62	51.2
6-10	23	19.0
11-15	20	16.5
16-20	7	5.8
21-25	3	2.5
26+	6	5.0
News Media	91	45.3
1-5	29	32.0
6-10	23	25.2
11-15	15	16.4
16-20	11	12.1
21-25	11	12.1
26+	2	2.2

## Results

### Status of Military-News Media Relations

Questions 3 through 15 of the survey use Likert-type items to gauge each respondent's perceptions of different attributes of the military-news media relationship. Responses were coded on a 1 to 5 scale, with 1 being strongly agree and 5 being strongly disagree. SPSS was used to calculate the frequencies, means, and *t* values ( $df = 210$  and the standard for statistical significance of  $p < .05$ ) for each question. Comparing the means, frequencies, and distributions for military respondents against those of news media respondents provided sufficient information to determine agreement or disagreement between the perceptions of different attributes of the military-news media relationship.

Questions 3 and 4 address the status of the relationship today. Question 3 states that the military and news media have an adequate working relationship during times of peace. Question 4 states that the military and news media have an adequate working relationship during times of war. The questions were intended to assess each respondent's perceptions of the relationship during differing situations, namely peace and war. Listed below is a compilation of the responses (see Table 2).

Table 2

Responses to Status of Relationship Today (Raw Numbers and Percentages)

Response to:	Agreement			Disagreement		
	SA	A	N	D	SD	<u>Mean</u>
<b>Status in peace</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	16	82	13	10	0	
%	13.2	67.8	10.7	8.3	0.0	2.140
<b>News Media</b>						
#	5	59	17	10	0	
%	5.5	64.8	18.7	11.0	0.0	2.352
t value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -2.04						
<b>Status in war</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	6	62	20	29	4	
%	5.0	51.2	16.5	24.0	3.3	2.694
<b>News media</b>						
#	3	23	26	26	13	
%	3.3	25.3	28.6	28.6	14.3	3.560
t value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -3.87						

Note: The means are based on the 1-5 coding scheme: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree.

The results of the frequencies for status of the relationship during times of peace indicate that each institution's perceptions of relationship agree. Of the military respondents, 81% agree in some measure that there is an adequate working

relationship during times of peace. Of the news media respondents, 70.3% also agree in some measure with the statement illustrating an agreement in perceptions between the two institutions. The results of the  $t$ -test indicate that there is a statistical difference between the means of the military and news media responses for this question. The  $t$  value of -2.04 is greater than the  $t$  distribution score of  $\pm 1.960$  with 210 degrees of freedom (df) and a .05 level of significance (p). Although the  $t$  value does indicate a statistically significant difference between the mean responses, that difference is accounted for in the strength of each institution's agreement. The military agreed more strongly with the statement, creating the difference. As the difference does not cross the boundaries of Agreement ( $< 3.0$ ) and Disagreement ( $> 3.0$ ) according to the coding method, the two institutions still indicate an overall agreement with the statement.

The results of the frequencies for the status of the relationship during times of war indicate that the perceptions of each institution do not agree. Of the military respondents, 56.7% agreed in some measure with the statement. Conversely, only 28.6% of the news media respondents agreed in some measure with the statement. The results indicate that a majority of military personnel perceive the relationship to be adequate during times of war, whereas less than one-third of the news media respondents perceived the relationship as adequate. The  $t$  value for this question, -3.87, indicates that there is a statistical difference in the mean answers of the two institutions.

Additionally, the .866 difference occurs across the agreement-disagreement spectrum illustrated in the coding values for the responses. The mean answers for the military (2.694) fall in the agreement categories (< 3.0), whereas the mean answers for the media (3.560) fall within the disagreement category (> 3.0), indicating an overall disagreement in the perceptions concerning the relationship during combat.

#### Restrictions of Access to a Combat Zone

Questions 5 through 8 focus on the perceptions of the military and news media toward restrictions of access to a combat zone. Question 5 focuses on the overall perceptions concerning restrictions of access. Questions 6 to 8 each address a subattribute of the access attribute. Question 5 states that the military should restrict access to a combat zone. Question 6 states that the news media should be credentialed by the military prior to entering a combat zone. Question 7 states that news media personnel should be required to follow military security ground rules in combat. Question 8 states that the military should be responsible for providing transportation and communication assets to the media in a combat zone.

Comparing the perceptions surrounding the attribute and each subattribute of restrictions of access allows an evaluation of the overall institutional perceptions toward restrictions of access. Table 3 displays the results from each of the four questions.

Table 3

### Responses to Restrictions of Access (Raw Numbers and Percentages)

	Agreement			Disagreement		
Response to:	SA	A	N	D	SD	<u>Mean</u>
<b>Military restrictions</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	33	42	20	21	5	
%	27.3	34.7	16.5	17.4	4.1	2.364
<b>News media</b>						
#	4	17	11	42	17	
%	4.4	18.7	12.1	46.2	18.7	3.560
t value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -7.46						
<b>Credentials</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	62	46	7	4	2	
%	51.2	38.0	5.8	3.3	1.7	1.661
<b>News media</b>						
#	14	53	7	14	3	
%	15.4	58.2	7.7	15.4	3.3	2.330
t value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -5.16						
<b>Security rules</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	85	32	3	1	0	
%	70.2	26.4	2.5	0.8	0.0	1.339
<b>News Media</b>						
#	15	48	14	11	3	
%	16.5	52.7	15.4	12.1	3.3	2.330

Response to:	<u>Agreement</u>			<u>Disagreement</u>			<u>Mean</u>
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
<b>Transportation</b>							
Military							
#	12	39	20	36	14		
%	9.9	32.2	16.5	29.8	11.3	3.008	
News Media							
#	7	33	24	23	4		
%	7.7	36.3	26.4	25.3	4.4	2.824	

t value (df = 210, p > .05) = 1.16

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The results indicate that the perceptions of the two institutions concerning the restriction of access attribute are not in agreement. Question 5 states that the military should restrict access to the battlefield. Of the military respondents, 62% agreed in some measure. Conversely, only 23.1% of news media respondents agreed to some degree with the statement, and 64.9% of the news media disagreed in some measure with the statement. The mean answers for each institution also differed by 1.196. The mean answer for the military was 2.364, indicating an overall agreement with the statement, and the mean for the news media was 3.560, indicating an overall disagreement with the statement.

The t-value for the question also supports a statistically significant difference in the mean responses for each institution. Additionally, the 1.196 difference in the mean answers occurred across the agreement-disagreement spectrum, highlighting the

disagreement in perceptions surrounding this attribute of the military-news media relationship.

The perceptions of the subattributes of the restriction of access attribute indicate agreement between the two institutional perceptions. The military and news media agree that media representatives should be credentialed by the military prior to entering a combat zone. Results show that 89.3% of the military respondents and 73.6% of the news media respondents agreed in some measure with the statement. The  $t$ -value in this case indicates a statistically significant difference. The statistical difference, though, is in the levels of agreement with the statement. The means for the two institutions differed by .669, with both mean scores falling within the agreement category.

The military and the news media perceptions of security ground rules and the military's requirement to provide transportation and communication assets also agree. Results show that 96.6% of the military respondents and 69.2% of the news media respondents agreed in some form with the security ground rules statement, indicating an overall agreement between the perceptions of the two institutions. The  $t$ -value again indicates a statistically significant difference across the levels of agreement with the statement. Both institutions agree with the statement, but the military agrees more strongly with the statement.

The institutional perceptions of the transportation and communication subattribute are also in agreement. The  $t$  value for the question indicates that there is

no statistically significant difference in the mean scores of each institution, indicating agreement in the perceptions surrounding this subattribute.

The results indicate that although the perceptions of each institution concerning the subattributes of restriction of access agree, the perceptions surrounding this attribute of the relationship do not agree.

#### Prepublication Security Review of News Material

The perceptions of the second attribute of the military-news media relationship, prepublication security reviews, are examined in Questions 9 to 13. The statements in this section of the questionnaire assess the perceptions of each institution concerning the attribute and different subattributes of prepublication security reviews of news material. Questions 11, 12, and 13 address the attribute itself, whereas questions 9 and 10 address different subattributes.

Question 9 focuses on the perceptions surrounding the publication of classified information by the news media, and Question 10 addresses the military using prepublication security reviews to protect their public image. Questions 11, 12, and 13 address the validity of prepublication security reviews, the military's ability to institute such reviews, and the media's responsibility to accept the reviews. The statements again measure the institution's perceptions of each issue through agreement or disagreement with each different statement. The responses to the statements are displayed in Table 4 .

Table 4

### Responses to Security Review (Raw Numbers and Percentages)

Response to:	Agreement			Disagreement		
	SA	A	N	D	SD	<u>Mean</u>
<b>Classified information</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	101	18	1	0	1	
%	83.5	14.9	0.8	0.0	0.8	1.198
<b>News media</b>						
#	30	33	19	5	4	
%	33.0	36.6	20.9	5.5	4.4	2.121
<b>t value (df = 210, p &lt; .05) = -8.23</b>						
<b>Filter stories</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	8	17	19	50	27	
%	6.6	14.0	15.7	41.3	22.3	3.587
<b>News media</b>						
#	3	5	4	24	55	
%	3.3	5.5	4.4	26.4	60.4	4.352
<b>t value (df = 210, p &lt; .05) = -4.95</b>						
<b>Security reviews</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	4	11	17	68	21	
%	3.3	9.1	14.0	56.2	17.4	3.752
<b>News media</b>						
#	19	18	11	36	7	
%	20.9	19.8	12.1	39.6	7.7	2.934

t value (df = 210, p < .05) = 5.22

Response to:	Agreement			Disagreement		
	SA	A	N	D	SD	<u>Mean</u>
<b>Maintain ability</b>						
Military						
#	29	74	8	8	2	
%	24.0	61.2	6.6	6.6	1.7	2.008
News media						
#	4	35	15	21	16	
%	4.4	38.5	16.5	23.1	17.6	3.110
<i>t</i> value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -7.72						
<b>Accept requirements</b>						
Military						
#	32	68	9	9	3	
%	26.4	56.2	7.4	7.4	2.5	2.033
News media						
#	3	30	12	32	14	
%	3.3	33.0	13.2	35.2	15.4	3.264
<i>t</i> value ( <u>df</u> = 210, p < .05) = -8.52						

The results indicate agreement in the perceptions of the two institutions pertaining to the subattributes of prepublication security review. Question 9 assesses the perceptions of each institution regarding publishing classified information in a combat zone. Results show that 98.4% of the military respondents and 69.6% of the news media agreed in some measure with the statement. The *t* value for this question does indicate a statistically significant difference in the mean responses, but the

difference falls within the levels of agreement by each institution and not across the agreement-disagreement spectrum. The military respondents' level of agreement with the statement was significantly higher than the levels of agreement of the news media. Although there is a difference in how strongly each institution agrees with the statement, both institutions agree with the concept presented.

Likewise, both institutions' perceptions agree about the military's use of prepublications security reviews to protect their public image. The majority of the respondents from both institutions disagreed with the statement. The  $t$  value for the question indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean answers, yet the difference lies in the levels of disagreement with the statement. The data indicate agreement between the perceptions of two institutions concerning this subattribute, with a statistically significant difference in the levels of how each institution disagrees with the statement.

Questions 11, 12, and 13 address the attribute itself to gauge levels of agreement or disagreement. The responses for each question indicate a lack of agreement between the perceptions of the two institutions concerning the prepublication security review attribute of the military-news media relationship.

Question 11 states that no combat situation warrants the use of prepublication security reviews. Responses show that 73.3% of the military respondents disagreed with the statement, whereas 47.3% of the news media respondents disagreed in some measure. The  $t$  value for the question indicates that there is a statistically significant

difference in the mean responses of the two institutions, and that the .818 difference occurs across the agreement-disagreement spectrum.

Question 12 addresses the idea that the military should maintain the ability to impose prepublication security reviews of news materials in certain situations. Of the military respondents, 85.2% agreed with the statement, whereas only 42.9% of the news media respondents agreed in some measure with the statement. The  $t$  value for this question indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean responses. The 1.102 difference in the means also fell across the agreement-disagreement spectrum, with the military in agreement with the statement, and the news media in some measure of disagreement.

Question 13 addresses the perceptions surrounding the news media and their acceptance of prepublication security reviews in a combat zone. Of the military respondents, 82.6% agreed in some measure that the news media should accept the requirements. Conversely, only 36.3% of the news media respondents agreed that they should accept the requirements in a combat zone in certain situations. The  $t$  value for the question indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean answers, with the difference again falling across the agreement-disagreement spectrum. The majority of the military respondents agreed in some measure, whereas the majority of news media respondents disagreed in some measure.

The data indicate that although the military and news media perceptions surrounding the subattributes of prepublication security reviews agree, the perceptions surrounding the attribute itself do not agree.

#### The Future of the Relationship

Questions 14 and 15 address the perceptions of each institution concerning the relationship. Question 14 addresses the perceptions of each institution concerning the military's actions toward improving the relationship. Question 15 addresses the perceptions of each institution about improving the relationship in the future to provide the best possible coverage of future combat situations. The results are listed in Table 5.

The responses to Question 14 indicate that the institutional perceptions of the military's actions to improve the working relationship do not agree. Of the military respondents, 71.9% perceived the military as continually striving to improve the relationship. Alternately, only 23.1% of the news media respondents agreed in some measure. The  $t$  value for the question indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean answers for each institution. Additionally, the 1.071 difference between the mean scores for each institution fell across the agreement-disagreement spectrum. The majority of the military agreed in some measure with the statement and the majority of news media respondents disagreed in some measure with the statement.

Table 5

Responses to the Future Questions (Raw Data and Percentages)

Response to:	Agreement			Disagreement		
	SA	A	N	D	SD	<u>Mean</u>
<b>Military strives</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	26	61	22	10	2	
%	21.5	50.4	18.2	8.3	1.7	2.182
<b>News media</b>						
#	3	18	33	27	10	
%	3.3	19.8	36.3	29.7	11.0	3.253
<b>t value (<u>df</u> = 210, p &lt; .05) = -8.05</b>						
<b>Future coverage</b>						
<b>Military</b>						
#	57	49	11	4	0	
%	47.1	40.5	9.1	3.3	0.0	1.686
<b>News media</b>						
#	47	41	2	1	0	
%	51.6	45.1	2.2	1.1	0.0	1.538
<b>t value (<u>df</u> = 210, p &gt; .05) = 1.46</b>						

The responses to question 15 indicate agreement between the perceptions of each institution concerning the need to work together in the future to improve combat coverage and the relationship. Results reflect that 87.6% of the military respondents and 96.7% of the news media correspondents agreed in some measure with the statement. Additionally, the t value for the question indicates that there is not a

statistically significant difference in the mean responses from each institution. As such, the lack of a statistical difference indicates agreement in the perceptions of the two institutions concerning the future of the relationship.

#### Relevant Questions

Questions 16 and 17 address the respondents' views on the biggest problems in military-news media relations and ask for recommendations to improve the relationship. Answers were furnished by 59 news media respondents and 96 military respondents for these questions on the questionnaire. The responses were categorized by response type after analyzing the contents of each response (see Appendix C for categorization scheme). A small sample of responses (20 news media and 30 military) were coded by a fellow student according to the listed coding scheme. The results produced an intercoder reliability coefficient of .95 (see Appendix D). The overall results are discussed in the following sections.

#### Military Responses to the Biggest Problem

Thirty respondents indicated that the biggest problem in military-news media lay in lack of understanding between the two institutions. These respondents indicated that journalists' lack of military experience and the news media's overall lack of understanding of military operations are the biggest problems. Overall, 22 respondents indicated that the conflicting missions of each institution created the problems. The responses included the conflict between the military mission and the profit-driven, "capitalistic" ideals of the media. Of the military respondents, 17

indicated that the news media maintained a negative bias in their reporting, which creates the biggest problem between the two institutions; 16 respondents indicated a lack of trust between military and news media as the greatest problem; 10 individuals indicated the news media's disregard for security requirements as the main problem; and 1 respondent indicated that high-technology communications equipment creates the biggest problem.

#### News Media Responses to the Biggest Problem

Of the news media respondents, 16 indicated a lack of trust as the biggest problem. The respondents indicated that past events and previous working relations in combat have created an atmosphere of distrust between the two institutions. Results show that 14 respondents listed inexperienced journalists with no prior military exposure as the problem; 10 respondents listed the military's "protectionist" policies as the problems, including the military's withholding information harmful to their public image, as well as withholding information until the last possible minute as the major problems; 5 respondents listed competing missions as the biggest problem; 5 respondents listed the lack of access; and 4 respondents listed the lack of understanding as the greatest problems. Two respondents left the question blank.

#### Military Responses to Recommendations

Of the military respondents, 65 indicated that the military and the news media need to train together in peacetime to alleviate problems during combat. Respondents

recommended orientations, formal training sessions, and education seminars as methods to increase knowledge between the two institutions.

Nineteen military respondents recommended that the news media practice responsible journalism. The recommendations included increasing honesty and decreasing editorial content of news stories. Six respondents recommended increasing the news media's access to the battlefield as a means of improving relations. Four respondents recommended Public Affairs training for all officers in the military. One respondent recommended "taking out CNN's satellites," and 1 respondent left the recommendation question blank.

#### News Media Responses to Recommendations

Thirty respondents recommended working together more during peace to be prepared to cover war. The recommendations included increasing communications on a weekly basis, as well as seminars, training sessions, and orientations for both institutions. Nine respondents recommended increasing the amount of public affairs training military personnel receive to improve relations. Five individuals recommended opening electronic Freedom of Information files as a method to improve relations. Four respondents recommended increasing honesty between both institutions. Two respondents recommended replacing the "old guard" and "old generals" who perpetuate poor relations between the military and the media. One respondent recommended increasing a journalist's pay for covering military operations, and four individuals did not respond to the question.

## Discussion and Conclusions

This study offers evidence to document whether military and news media perceptions surrounding different attributes of the military-news media relationship agree. It is an application of the coorientation measurement model (McLeod & Chaffee, 1973) to isolate perceptions that may, when not in agreement, create tensions within a relationship. A total of 212 military and news media professionals responded to the questionnaire delivered by mail to their work addresses. The basic goal of this study was to highlight the differences in perceptions toward attributes of the relationship that might create tension between the two institutions.

This study attempted to test three hypotheses: First, that military and news media perceptions concerning restrictions of access do not agree. Second, that military and news media perceptions concerning prepublication security reviews of news materials do not agree. Third, that military and news media perceptions surrounding the future of the relationship agree. There was support for all three hypotheses.

This study is limited in scope in the following ways: (a) The respondents may not represent the institutions' perceptions toward the three attributes of the relationship; (b) the study only examines the perceptions of the institutions toward the identifying attributes of the relationship and does not delve into the accuracy of the

perceptions held by each institution; (c) the study deals only with military and news media personnel in the United States and does not account for those out of the country.

This study assumes that the respondents retain the power and the positions to support “reification” of the data to apply to the institutions as a whole (Grunig & Stamm, 1973). As such, the sample profile indicates support for the assumption. The study also assumes that the military and news media are each oriented toward the other as collectives as well as individuals to ensure an institutional response.

#### Status of Military-News Media Relations

It is evident from Table 1 that the perceptions of the status of the relationship differ when the nation is involved in an armed conflict. The two institutions' perceptions of the relationship are in agreement when addressing the status during times of peace. The differences in perceptions arise when addressing the status of the relationship during times of war. The results indicate that there is disagreement between the two institutions' perceptions. As such, the results of this question support the ideological background for this research: examining attributes of the relationship during times of war to identify conflicting perceptions that may create tension in the relationship. Although the perceptions of the status of the relationship are not directly related to the hypotheses of this study, the results support the need for an examination of the problems that exist between the two institutions during times of war.

### Restrictions of Access to a Combat Zone

The results from this section provide an interesting twist in the understanding of the differences in perceptions concerning restrictions of access to a combat zone. Table 3 clearly indicates that there is a difference between perceptions held by the military and the news media concerning the necessity for these restrictions.

The interesting fact, though, is that the perceptions of the two institutions concerning subattributes of restrictions agree in some measure even when perceptions concerning the restrictions themselves disagree.

The results appear to indicate that the news media and the military disagree about the necessity of restricting access to a combat zone. The news media do not agree that the military should restrict access, whereas the military agree. Yet both institutions' perceptions agree when addressing attributes of the restrictions. The data indicate that the two institutions disagree about the necessity for restrictions of access, but if restrictions are imposed, the two institutions agree upon how they should be implemented. As such, the data indicate that some factor or factors, other than the subattributes of restrictions of access, created the disagreement between the perceptions surrounding restriction of access to a combat zone.

### Prepublication Security Review of News Material

The results from these questions, listed in Table 4, again provide interesting results for interpretation. The two institutions' perceptions concerning subattributes

of the prepublications security reviews agree, whereas the perceptions surrounding the attribute itself do not agree.

The results indicate that there is some other factor or factors responsible for the difference in perceptions surrounding security reviews of news material. The disagreement in the perceptions surrounding security reviews is evident, yet the cause of the disagreement is not ascertainable through examination of the responses to the statements.

#### The Future of the Relationship

The two institutions agree that each should work to provide the best possible coverage of combat in the future. Table 5 lists the results and clearly shows that both institutions' perceptions agree concerning this attribute. An interesting twist, though, is evident in the responses from the news media to Question 14 and their comparison to the military's responses. The responses indicate that the news media do not perceive the military as continually striving to improve the relationship. Conversely, the military responses indicate that they perceive themselves as continually working to improve the relationship.

Subsequently, the evident disagreement indicates that a disagreement in the perception of a subattribute of the future of military-news media relations does not necessarily forecast a disagreement in perceptions surrounding the attribute itself. Although the news media may not perceive the military as continually striving to improve the relationship, both agree that in the future the two should work together.

As such, the results from this section support previous indications that the perceptions surrounding subattributes may not affect the perceptions surrounding the attribute itself.

#### Factors Affecting Perceptions

One factor that may cause the differences in perceptions concerning the attributes of the relationship is the inherently different nature of each institution. Although the author does not assume to speak for each institution, it appears that ideological differences between the two create the differing perceptions. The news media act as the guardians of First Amendment Rights, whereas the military does not place First Amendment Rights above the safety and security of its personnel.

The news media, inherently, dislike any form of censorship. Any form of censorship represents an assault on the principles of their business and their rights. Conversely, the military may also dislike censorship, but it is not an affront to its basic role in society. It is tool that serves a greater purpose: the safety of its personnel.

As such, the differing ideological backgrounds of each institution may affect the cognitions of each institution concerning different aspects of the relationship. The difficulty lies in determining exactly where the ideological backgrounds differ and then exposing the differences in order to facilitate greater understanding. Once the differences have been clearly identified, each institution can better address each issue from a common viewpoint and orientation.

### Relevant Questions

The responses listed in Questions 16 and 17 provide many interesting insights into the perceptions of any problems between the military and the media as well as succinct recommendations for improving the relationship. It is interesting to note that a lack of understanding and a lack of experience account for the greatest number of responses by each institution. Similarly, training together in peace to prepare for war accounted for the greatest number of responses to the recommendations questions for both institutions. The responses may indicate a need for greater communication between the institutions. Subsequently, increasing communications concerning the attributes of the military-news media relation may result in improved relations during combat.

### Support for Hypotheses

Three hypotheses were laid out based on the earlier assumptions. Support for the hypotheses was strong, and additional interesting facts surfaced during the research.

The first hypothesis theorized that military and news media perceptions concerning restrictions of access would not agree. As illustrated in the Results and the Discussion, the institutional perceptions concerning restrictions of access do not agree. The military indicated that it should restrict access to the battlefield, whereas the news media indicated that the military should not restrict access to the battlefield. The frequencies, means, and  $t$  test all support a significant statistical difference in the

answers given by each institution. Although the perceptions concerning restrictions of access do not agree, the perceptions surrounding the subattributes of restrictions of access do agree.

The second hypothesis theorized that the military and news media perceptions concerning prepublication security review of news material would not agree. The data again indicated a statistically significant difference between the responses given by each institution. Again, though, the institutions' perceptions concerning subattributes of security reviews were in agreement.

The third hypothesis theorized that the military and the news media perceptions concerning the future of the relationship would agree. The data support this hypothesis and display no significant statistical difference in the responses of each institution. Both institutions believe that they should work together in the future to provide the best possible coverage of combat situations.

### The Coorientation Model

Examining the results of the study within the framework of the coorientation model indicates a lack of agreement between the two institutions concerning their perceptions of the military-news media relationship. The lack of agreement between the perceptions surrounding attributes of the military-news media relationship indicates an overall lack of agreement between the perceptions of the relationship itself. The data obtained in this study concerning the status of the relationship during combat supports these findings.

Increasing communication, training, and exposure during times of peace, along with the other recommended improvements listed in this study, may increase the levels of agreement between perspectives of the two institutions. Moving toward higher levels of agreement and mutual understanding may in the future lead to more effective communication between the two institutions and a decrease in tensions regarding different attributes of the relationship.

#### Future Research

This study does not answer every possible question about the military-news media relationship, nor does it attempt to do so. As a result, numerous opportunities for future research in this area have been considered by the author after considering the results of the study.

The most obvious opportunity would be to expand the coorientation research to include data concerning the accuracy and congruency of the institutional perceptions within the framework of the coorientation measurement model. The second possible area of research could focus on the types, methods, and effectiveness of communication between the two institutions. Such research could identify areas of weakness or ineffectiveness and institute policy changes within each institution to improve communication.

#### Practical Applications

The roles, goals, and missions of the military and the news media are inherently different. The media are responsible for keeping the public informed, and the military

fights our nation's battles. Identifying areas within the relationship that cause tension between the two may lead to increased knowledge, understanding, and agreement between the two institutions.

It is the author's hope that this study will encourage more research to fully understand and improve the relationship between the military and the news media in the future. The military and the news media will surely work side by side in future armed conflicts. The American public has the right to both the best fighting force in the world and the most accurate, dependable information concerning that force as is possible. Understanding the relationship and the perceptions within each institution is the key to improving coverage of future combat situations.

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## Appendices

**Appendix A:**

**Cover Letter**



DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA  
College of Communication

October 18, 1996

Sir, Ma'am,

I am a masters student in the journalism department at the University of Alabama. I am beginning work on my thesis and I would appreciate your help for what will be a very important study on military-news media relations.

My thesis deals with perceptions held by military and news media professionals and how these perceptions may affect the military-news media relationship.

Enclosed you will find a survey and a self-addressed stamped envelope. You were randomly selected from a list of military and news media professionals to receive this survey. I would ask that you complete it and return it to me in the provided envelope as soon as possible. I would like to have the surveys by November 2, 1996.

This study was not commissioned and is not directly supported by either the military or the news media. I would ask that you fill out the survey as honestly and completely as possible. While I cannot guarantee anonymity, your responses will be kept completely confidential. If you would like to receive an executive summary of the research, please make a note at the end of the survey.

Thank you for taking the time to aid my research.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive ink, appearing to read "H.C. Cate III".

Hugh C. Cate III  
Captain, United States Army  
Journalism, The University of Alabama  
(205) 556-5641

Appendix B:  
Questionnaire

# SURVEY OF MILITARY AND NEWS MEDIA PROFESSIONALS



## I. INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

1. Are you employed by...  the military  news media
2. How would you describe your job?  
 Editor  Public Affairs Officer  
 Journalist  Public Information Officer  
 Public Relations  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Press Relations Officer

## II. PERCEPTIONS

Based on your experience, for each statement, please check below if you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), neither agree nor disagree (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD):

- |  | SA                    | A                     | N                     | D                     | ND                    |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 3. The military and the news media have an adequate working relationship during times of peace.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. The military and the news media have an adequate working relationship during times of war.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. The military should restrict news media access to the battlefield during combat.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. News media representatives should be credentialed by the U.S. military prior to entering a combat zone.   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. News media personnel should be required to follow military security ground rules in a combat zone.  | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. The military should be responsible for providing the news media with transportation and communication assets in a combat zone.                          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. News media personnel should not publish classified information or information detrimental to the security of military forces in a combat zone.          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. The military should use pre-publication security reviews of news material to filter stories which may be detrimental to their public image.            | <input type="radio"/> |
| 11. No combat situations warrant the use of pre-publication security reviews of news material.   | <input type="radio"/> |
| 12. The military should maintain the ability to require pre-approval of news material in a combat zone in certain circumstances.                           | <input type="radio"/> |
| 13. The news media should accept the military's requirements for pre-publication security reviews of news material in a combat zone in certain situations. | <input type="radio"/> |

SA A N D ND

14. The military continually strives to improve its working relationship with the news media.

15. The military and the news media should work to provide the best possible coverage of combat in the future.

## III. RELEVANT QUESTIONS

16. What do you consider the biggest problem in military-news media relations today?

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17. What would you recommend be done to improve relations?

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## IV. DEMOGRAPHICS

18. Gender:  Male  Female

19. Years in current position: \_\_\_\_\_

20. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

21. Have you ever worked with the military or news media in a combat zone?

Yes  No

Using the enclosed postage-paid envelope, please return this survey by

November 2, 1996

If you are interested in receiving a copy of the results,  
please indicate so here. Thank You!

Yes, please send me the results

Mail To:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C:**  
**Categorization Scheme**

**Categoriantion Scheme  
( by response type)**

**I. Military Responses to the Biggest Problem**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Unit of Analysis</u>	<u>Responses</u>
A. Understanding	Any response listing understanding, experience, or lack there of.	30
B. Missions	Any response listing mission, profit, capitalism, deadlines, or scoop	22
C. Bias	Any response listing negative, bias, or sensationalism.	17
D. Trust	Any response listing trust, mistrust, or distrust.	16
E. Security	Any response listing security or access.	10
F. Other	Any response that does not fit above	1

**II. Media Responses to The Biggest Problem**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Responses</u>
A. Understanding	18
D. Trust	16
E. Security	14
B. Missions	5
F. Other	5

**III. Military Responses to Recomendations**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Unit of Analysis</u>	<u>Responses</u>
A. Training	Any response listing training, education orientation, communication	69
B. Journalism	Any response listing honesty, editorials, responsibility, and journalism	19

C. Access	Any response listing access, security, and restrictions.	6
D. Other	Any responses not fitting above categories	1

#### IV. Media Responses to Recommendations

<u>Category</u>	<u>Responses</u>
A. Training	39
C. Access	5
B. Journalism	4
D. Other	3

**Appendix D**  
**Inter-Coder Reliability**

## Inter-Coder Reliability

Categories

<u>Coders</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>
A	14 - A, 4 - C 2 - B	9 - A, 7-D 4 - E	18 - A, 2 - B	19 - A, 1 - B
B	13 - A, 4 - C 2 - B, 1- 2	8 - A, 7 -D 3 - E, 2 - B	18 - A, 2 - B	19 - A. 1 - D
Total Agreement	<u>19 OF 20</u>	<u>18 OF 20</u>	<u>20 OF 20</u>	<u>19 OF 20</u>
Reliability =	$\frac{2M}{N_1 + N_2}$	=	$\frac{2(76)}{80 + 80}$	= $\frac{152}{160} = .95$